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T. C. CHAMBERLIN

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

WISCONSIN

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

FOR THE YEAR 1879.

BY T. C. CHAMBERLIN,
Chief Geologist.

MADISON, WIS.:
DAVID ATWOOD, STATE PRINTER.
1880.

To His Excellency, WM. E. SMITH,
Governor of Wisconsin:

SIR:—I have the honor to present, herewith, a brief report of the progress of the Wisconsin Geological Survey, for the year 1879.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. C. CHAMBERLIN,
Chief Geologist.

BELOIT, *December* 31, 1879.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1879.

My last annual report brought the history of the survey up to the close of 1878. The organic law of the survey designated the 31st of March, 1879, as the date on which the survey was to be completed; so that but three months of the time allotted for its prosecution fell within the present year. These, from the nature of the season, as well as the condition of the work, were mainly devoted to laboratory investigations, the preparation of manuscript maps and illustrations for the final report, the labelling and distribution of specimens, and the miscellaneous work that necessarily attends the closing of a survey and the publication of its results. Some supplementary field work has been done, but the amount has not been large, and has consisted mainly of revisits to districts previously examined, for the purpose of securing additional data. There is, therefore, less than usual of public interest that falls appropriately within the province of an annual report, whose main purpose is to present the administrative history of the work. The final studies upon the accumulated data have developed many interesting and valuable results, but these will soon find a better presentation in the more elaborate final report. The progress that has been made in the preparation and publication of that report claims a few words.

PUBLICATION.

The plan of publication has been stated in previous annual reports. To save inquiries, I beg leave, however, to reiterate, what has been repeatedly published before, that Volume I, owing to the requirements of the law of publication, will appear last. It is in part prepared, but its completion must await the finishing of

Publication.

all the detailed studies involved in the preparation of the other volumes. Volume II was issued in the fall of 1877. This volume related mainly to the Paleozoic series of the eastern, central and southwestern portions of the state. It was originally planned that the third volume should treat of the remainder of the Paleozoic territory, which mainly lies adjacent to the upper Mississippi, and of the fossils of the state, thus completing, essentially, the discussion of the fossiliferous formations—the space that might remain in the volume to be filled with the report on the extreme northwestern portion of the state. In pursuance of this plan, about half of the volume was composed and stereotyped, when it was found that more time than had been anticipated would be required for the satisfactory execution of some portions of the lithographic work. To prevent corresponding delay in the appearance of the series of volumes, taken as a whole, a modification of the plan of publication was adopted.

The manuscript report on the iron- and copper-bearing formations of the northwestern portion of the state, that was intended to form a part of the volume above outlined, was joined with the reports on the Menominee iron region, to constitute a volume, leaving the one then half stereotyped to be completed with other matter. This change brings the main discussions of the two great metalliferous formations together in one volume, an advantage which perhaps compensates for the lack of the geographical consecutiveness which the original plan proposed.

Manuscript for this volume, which it was now thought best to designate number three, was placed in the printer's hands the first of May, and the volume is now (January 1st) in the binder's hands, and will probably be placed before the public as soon as this sketch. The half-completed volume, laid temporarily aside, will next be completed, to be followed by Volume I, which will, among other things, treat compendiously of the general geology of the state.

DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIMENS.

Section 3 of the organic law of the survey, provides that

"It shall be the duty of said geological corps, in the progress of the examinations hereby directed, to collect such specimens of rocks, ores, fossils, minerals, etc., as may be necessary to exemplify the geology of the state. Sets of these specimens shall be deposited with the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, and the State University, and with each one of the incorporated colleges of the state, and with each of the normal schools; *provided*, application be made to the chief geologist before the commencement of field work."

In pursuance of this requirement, large collections have been made during the progress of the survey. Of these, about 20,000 specimens have been distributed during the year. By far the greater portion of these were fossils. The most of the ores and the lithological specimens have been retained for studies not yet completed. A part of these are now being prepared for distribution, but some must yet be retained.

The interests of science demand that those specimens which have been made the types of special descriptions, should be kept together where they may be accessible to investigators. The law, as will be seen, makes no specific discrimination among the institutions entitled to receive specimens, but may be thought to imply that precedence should be given to the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, and the State University. Using the discretion which the constituted legal counsel of the state advises me lies within the prerogatives of my office, it has seemed to me best to place the collection of type fossils with the Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, and the collection of type lithological specimens with the State University, as they will thus presumptively be most available to the majority of scientists who may desire to examine them, since the description of new fossil species, within the state, will doubtless mainly be made through the medium of the Academy, while the study of lithological specimens requires chemical and microscopical appliances, best found